



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Dr. Alex Zakharia

**MIAMI SURGEON PLEADS GUILTY
TO CONTEMPT BASED ON FALSE TESTIMONY**

Dr. Alex Zakharia, 69, a cardiovascular surgeon licensed in Florida and practicing in the Miami area, pled guilty to a contempt of court, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced today.

Murphy was joined in the announcement by Daniel D. Roberts, FBI Special Agent in Charge.

Dr. Zakharia pled guilty before Hon. Paul Borman, United States District Judge for the Eastern District of Michigan. He admitted that in 2002 he had testified as an expert witness on behalf of the plaintiff in a lawsuit charging a doctor at the Veterans Administration hospital in Ann Arbor with medical malpractice in connection with a coronary artery bypass graft. He also admitted that during the deposition, he falsely bolstered his credibility as an expert by creating the impression that he was the lead surgeon for numerous coronary artery bypass grafts over the preceding several years, when in fact he had done no such surgeries. Finally, he admitted that when his having created this false impression came to light, it destroyed his credibility as an expert witness, and thereby obstructed the administration of justice.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Any professional who offers expert testimony must recognize the seriousness of his or her obligation to be candid and accurate. Otherwise the integrity of our judicial system becomes suspect."

Dr. Zakharia pled guilty under a plea agreement. According to the agreement, he faces up to one year in custody, must make restitution to the parties who were affected by his false testimony in this deposition and one other, and will retire from the practice of medicine by the end of the year. The government agreed to dismiss the felony charges pending against him for perjury, mail fraud and wire fraud.

Dr. Zakharia will be sentenced on December 11, 2007.